

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1 1. (Currently Amended) In a network comprising a content server and a plurality
2 of connected user computers, a method for delivering content comprising a storyline for a
3 reality-based electronic game from the content server to at least one user, the method
4 comprising:

5 deconstructing the complete storyline content into a plurality of episodes;
6 implementing in the content server a first episode into a first episodic game
7 module;

8 providing the first episodic game module to at least one user computer such that
9 only a first portion of the complete storyline content is currently available; thereafter

10 altering, in the content server, the first portion of the storyline content to include a
11 game-related reference to a current real-world event, said current event occurring after said first
12 episodic game module is transmitted to the at least one user; and

13 providing the reference to the at least one user.

1 2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising:
2 scheduling intervals for generation and transmission of episodic game modules
3 for the complete storyline content.

1 3. (Original) The method of claim 2, further comprising:
2 responsive to a technological improvement occurring during a first part of an
3 interval for generation and transmission of an episodic game module, incorporating the
4 technological improvement into the episodic game module scheduled for generation and
5 transmission for that interval.

1 4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2 further comprising:

2 responsive to a technological improvement occurring during implementation of an
3 episode, incorporating the technological improvement into the episodic game module scheduled
4 for generation and transmission for that interval.

1 5. (canceled)

1 6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein generating episodic game modules
2 further comprises:

3 generating a technology module and content module for each episodic game
4 module to allow modification of the technology module without requiring modification of the
5 content of an episodic game module.

1 7. (Currently Amended) In a network comprising a content server and a plurality
2 of connected user computers, a method of delivering content comprising a storyline for a reality-
3 based electronic game from the content server to at least one user comprising:
4 constructing a plurality of episodes to relate the complete storyline content;
5 implementing in the content server a first episode into a game module;
6 transmitting the first episodic game module to at least one user computer such that
7 only a portion of the complete storyline content is currently available; thereafter
8 altering, in the content server the remaining storyline content to include a game-
9 related reference to a current real-world event occurring after said game module is transmitted to
10 the at least one user; and
11 providing the reference to the at least one user after the at least one user accesses
12 the first episodic game module.

1 8. (Original) The method of claim 7 wherein an episodic game module is
2 transmitted at periodically scheduled intervals.

1 9. (Original) The method of claim 8 wherein the episodic game modules are
2 transmitted monthly.

1 10. (Currently Amended) A method of providing an Internet-enabled game, said
2 game including a plurality of episodes related to a storyline arc and made available serially on a
3 periodic basis, the method including steps implemented in a computer system comprising:
4 providing access to an initial episodic content module; and thereafter
5 altering the storyline arc;
6 creating new episodic content related to the altered storyline arc;
7 receiving information regarding a user's current state in the game;
8 responsive to the current state indicating that a conditional action has been
9 performed, enabling new episodic content to be accessed by a user; and
10 responsive to the current state indicating that a time limit for performing the
11 conditional action has been exceeded, automatically transmitting new episodic content to the
12 user.

1 11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10 wherein automatically
2 transmitting includes transmitting a voice mail message related to the user.

1 12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10 wherein automatically
2 transmitting includes transmitting an e-mail message related to the user.

1 13. (Previously Presented) The method of 10 wherein automatically transmitting
2 includes transmitting a pager message related to the user.

1 14-16. (Canceled)

1 17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10 wherein current state
2 information comprises a notification from an application module resident on a user's terminal
3 that the user has accessed a pre-specified web page.

1 18. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein current state information
2 comprises a user action.

1 19. (Original) The method of claim 18 wherein the user action is calling a
2 predefined telephone number.

1 20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 18 wherein the user action is
2 accessing a predetermined web site.

1 21. (Original) The method of claim 18 wherein the user action is requesting a
2 specific search term.

1 22. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein episodic content is stored within
2 a third-party website that is content-related to the storyline, and the users are directed to the web-
3 site to discover the episodic content.

1 23. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 22 wherein episodic content is
2 placed on a third party web site for compensation related to user traffic to the web site related to
3 users searching for the episodic content.

1 24. (Original) The method of claim 10 wherein an episode is made available
2 responsive to determining whether a user has submitted payment for the episode.

1 25-41 (Canceled)

1 42. (Currently Amended) In a network comprising a content server and a
2 plurality of connected user computers, a method for delivering content comprising a storyline for
3 a reality-based electronic game from the content server to at least one user, the method
4 comprising:

5 deconstructing the complete storyline content into a plurality of episodes;
6 implementing in the content server an episode into a sequence of episodic game
7 modules;

8 periodically transmitting one of the episodic game modules to at least one user
9 computer such that only a portion of the complete storyline content is currently available;
10 thereafter

11 altering in the content server the remaining storyline content to include a game-
12 related reference to a current real-world event occurring after a first one of said episodic game
13 module is transmitted to the at least one user; and

14 providing the reference to the at least one user after the at least one user accesses
15 the first episodic game module.

1 43. (Currently Amended) In a network comprising a content server and a
2 plurality of connected user computers, a method for delivering content comprising a storyline for
3 a reality-based electronic game from the content server to at least one user, the method
4 comprising:

5 deconstructing the storyline into a plurality of episodes;
6 implementing in the content server an episode into an episodic game module;
7 periodically permitting access to one of the episodic game modules by at least one
8 user computer such that only a portion of the complete storyline content is currently available;
9 thereafter

10 altering in the content server the remaining storyline content to include a game-
11 related reference to a current real-world event occurring after a first episodic game module is
12 accessed by the at least one user; and

13 providing the reference to the at least one user after the at least one user accesses
14 the first episodic game module.

1 44. (Currently Amended) In a network comprising a content server and a
2 plurality of connected user terminals, a method for providing entertainment content comprising a
3 storyline for an electronic game from the content server to at least one user, the method including
4 steps, implemented in the content server, comprising:

5 receiving a request from a user to gain access to an episode of the electronic
6 game;

7 delivering an episode of the electronic game to the user;
8 determining a date for the request received from the user; and
9 permitting access to the requested episode responsive to the determined date
10 being within a permitted window for delivery.

1 45-46. (Canceled)

1 47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further including
2 implementing a second episode into an episodic game module and providing the second game
3 module to the at least one user, said second game module including said game-related reference
4 to the real-world event.

1 48. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the reference is a
2 fabricated news story related to the real world event.

1 49. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein providing
2 includes transmitting from the content server to the at least one user computer over a network.

1 50. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein providing
2 includes providing the first episodic game module on a computer readable medium readable by
3 the at least one user computer.

1 51. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the reference is
2 provided to the at least one user computer by the content server using a network transport
3 mechanism.

1 52. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 51, wherein the network
2 transport mechanism includes a mechanism for sending one of an e-mail, a voice mail, a
3 facsimile, and an instant message.

1 53. (Currently Amended) In a network comprising a content server and a
2 plurality of connected user computers, a method for delivering content comprising a storyline for

3 a reality-based electronic game from a content server to a plurality of users, the method
4 comprising:
5 implementing in the content server the storyline content into a plurality of
6 episodes;
7 implementing the episodes into a sequence of episodic game modules; and
8 for each user, transmitting one or more of the episodic game modules to the user's
9 computer on a conditional basis, such that the plurality of users reach the same points in the
10 game at approximately the same time.

1 54. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 53, wherein transmitting on a
2 conditional basis includes determining whether an amount of time for completing a stage in the
3 game episode has been exceeded, and if so, transmitting an episodic game module.

1 55. (Currently Amended) In a network comprising a content server and a
2 plurality of connected user computers, a method for delivering content comprising a storyline for
3 a reality-based electronic game from the content server to a plurality of users, the method
4 comprising:
5 implementing the storyline into a plurality of episodes;
6 implementing in the content server the episodes into a sequence of episodic game
7 modules;
8 for each user, permitting access to the episodic game modules on a conditional
9 basis such that only a portion of the storyline content is currently available to the user; and
10 for each user, determining whether an amount of time for completing a
11 conditional action in a game episode has been exceeded, and if so, automatically transmitting an
12 episodic game module to the user to ensure that the users reach the same points in the game at
13 approximately the same time.

1 56. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 55, wherein permitting
2 access on a conditional basis includes determining whether the user has accomplished a task, and
3 if so permitting access to the next episodic game module.

1 57. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 56, wherein the task includes
2 one of accessing a specific web site and entering a specific search term.

1 58. (Currently Amended) In a network comprising a content server and a
2 plurality of connected user computers, a method for delivering content comprising a storyline for
3 a reality-based electronic game from the content server to a plurality of users, the method
4 comprising:

5 implementing the storyline into a plurality of episodes;

6 implementing in the content server the episodes into a sequence of episodic game
7 modules;

8 for each user, transmitting one or more episodic game modules to the user on a
9 conditional basis such that only a portion of the storyline content is currently available to the
10 user; and

11 for each user, determining whether an amount of time for completing a
12 conditional action in a game episode has been exceeded, and if so, automatically transmitting an
13 episodic game module to the user to ensure that the users reach the same stages in the game at
14 approximately the same time.